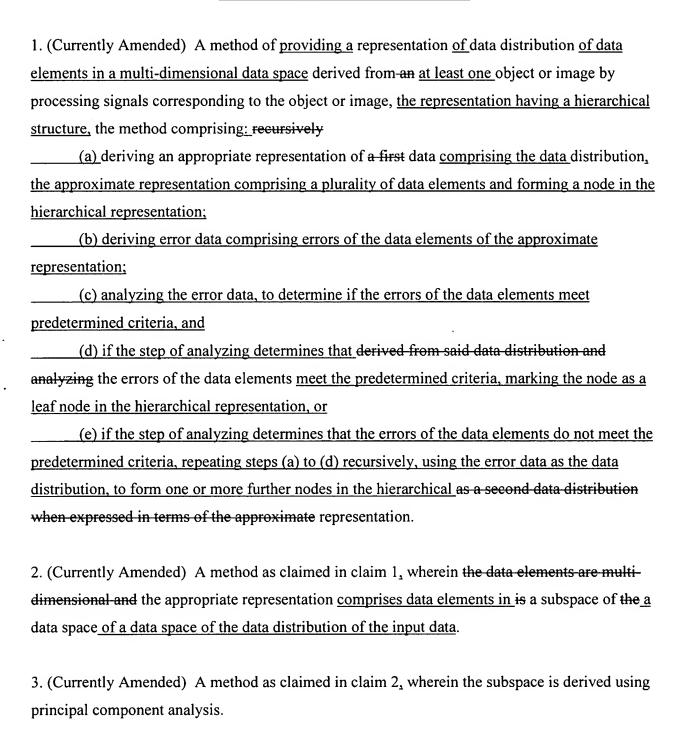
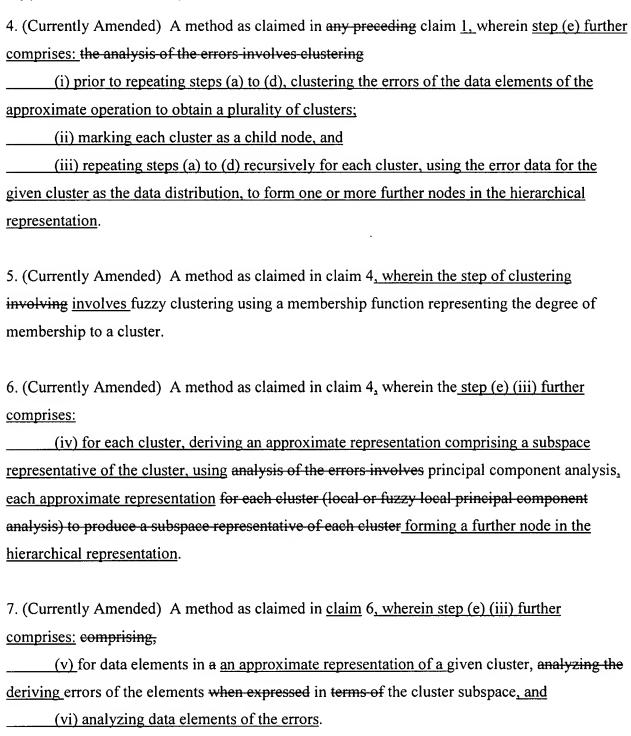
AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS



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8. (Currently Amended) A method as claimed in claim 7, wherein step (e) (iii) comprises: comprising

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_____repeating the steps (v) to (vi) of deriving a subspace representing an error cluster and analyzing the resulting errors to produce a tree structure with a top node and further nodes corresponding to the error clusters in a hierarchical tree structure.

- 9. (Currently Amended) A method as claimed in claim 8 7, wherein step (e) (v) further comprises: comprising
- (vii) stopping the method if the step of analyzing determines that the data elements meet predetermined criteria deciding to stop the repeating step for a given cluster depending on the error values.
- 10. (Currently Amended) A method as claimed in claim 8, further comprising;

 _____extending the model using new data to add adding new nodes to the hierarchical tree

 structure by processing new input data.
- 11. (Previously Presented) A method of representing a data element derived from an object or image by processing signals corresponding to the object or image, the method comprising expressing the data element in terms of a representation derived according to claim 1.
- 12. (Original) A method in claim 11 comprising expressing the element in terms of a tree structure having nodes and determining coefficients of the element for nodes of the tree structure.
- 13. (Original) A method as claimed in claim 12 comprising using a membership value representing the degree to which the data element corresponds to a node.
- 14. (Currently Amended) A method as claimed in claim 12 or claim 13 comprising quantizing the coefficients and/or the membership values.

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15. (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 1 involving data derived from an image or images in a sequence of images.

- 16. (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein the object or image corresponds to a person or a face.
- 17. (Currently Amended) A descriptor of a data element derived in accordance with a method according to any one of claims 11 to 1416, or claim 15 or claim 16 dependent on claims 11 to 14.
- 18. (Original) A descriptor as claimed in claim 17 comprising partial descriptors corresponding to nodes in a tree structure, each partial descriptor comprising a node identifier, coefficients for a node and optionally a membership value.
- 19. (Previously Presented) A method of matching or classifying a query data element derived from an object or image by processing signals corresponding to the object or image, the method comprising comparing a descriptor of the query data element according to claim 17 with database descriptor elements according to claim 17 using a matching function.
- 20. (Previously Presented) Apparatus set up to execute a method according to claim 1.
- 21 (Original) Apparatus as claimed in claim 20 comprising a processor, memory and image or object input means.
- 22. (Currently Amended) Computer program <u>embodied on a computer-readable medium</u> for executing a method according to any one of claims 1 to 16 or 19.
- 23. (Original) Computer readable storage medium comprising a computer program as claimed in claim 21.

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24. (New) A method claim for providing a representation of data distribution of data elements in an N multi-dimensional data space where N is greater than 2, and as claimed in claim 1.

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